

## **Report: Attending & presenting at the Annual Meeting of SSILA, CIPL Travel Grants**

**Name of the applicant/presenter:** Guillem Belmar Viernes

**Affiliation:** University of California, Santa Barbara

**Co-presenters:** Eric W. Campbell; Jeremías Salazar

**Conference location:** New York City (held at the same venue as the Linguistic Society of America)

**Title of the presentation:** Lexical and Morphological prenasalization in Sa'an Savi ña Nñuu Xnuviko

### **How was the presentation received?**

Our presentation was very well received. It was attended by some of the major names in the field, including the chair of a job committee that I am currently in the running for. The audience was very engaged, and we received praise for our sound methodology. We are currently thinking about turning it into a paper.

### **Suggestions/comments I received that will help advance my research:**

We also received some suggestions to advance our research, such as taking measurements of the whole prenasalized segment and normalize it according to the duration of the following vowel, so that we could make meaningful comparisons that way. Some of the questions from the audience also suggest that some parts of the talk needed some clarification, which we'll take into account for the writing process.

### **What else did I learn from the conference?**

SSILA is always full of very interesting presentations. I attended a session on working with archival material (and very few recordings) to figure out stress in Indigenous languages, which was extremely informative and presented new methodologies that made me reflect on the ways in which we collect and archive data. It was particularly interesting to see the approach taken by a community member who is using archival material to learn and teach her language, and how that approach differed (and complemented) the approach taken by more traditionally minded linguists.

Another organized session that I attended was on ideophones in Mayan languages. Ideophones are such an elusive category when it comes to language description, and it was incredible to see the methodology that the presenters were using to be able to have meaningful comparisons among three different Mayan languages. It was also extremely eye-opening to see how actual speakers of these languages were tackling the issue, as so much of the expressivity of language is often lost in translation.

I also had the opportunity to see some presentations on languages related to Mixtec (such as Triqui and Zapotec), and some of the approaches that these presentations took may inform my

future work (for example, looking at loanword phonology to better understand historical changes; or the possible reanalysis of codas as onsets of clusters).

In addition to the SSILA presentations, I could also attend some sessions at the LSA, since both conferences were held simultaneously. For example, I attended a presentation on how to ask about gender in linguistics research, which will change the way I will approach the issue in my future projects. This issue is very important for us fieldworkers, since we are constantly working with people, and we always need to think about what is appropriate to ask, what is not appropriate, how you ask about it and whether or not it is relevant for your research. Not much thought is given to self-identification of gender in fieldwork, but it is definitely something that we need to take into account and be mindful of.

Perhaps more importantly, attending both SSILA and the LSA allowed me to network, meeting with old acquaintances and getting to know like-minded scholars with whom I had very stimulating conversations. I am looking forward to the three possible collaborations that started during the conference.

#### **Appendix: Picture from the presentation**

